

# EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

## *Providence, RI*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Providence (population 160,728) for a Brownfields Pilot. Providence was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. The Pilot's efforts will be integrated with the city's New Cities Initiative, which targets abandoned industrial sites for redevelopment.

The Pilot will focus on a 280-acre area of the old industrial waterfront of Providence known as Narragansett Landing. Narragansett Landing is located adjacent to downtown Providence, bordered to the west by predominantly low-income residential neighborhoods in the city/state/federal Enterprise Community. The landing had been home to industrial port activities for nearly 100 years, including coal gasification plants, fuel storage areas, and metals recycling facilities. Most of the industry has departed or is being dismantled.

The current assessed value for land in this corridor is \$3.71 per square foot compared to an estimated \$70 per square foot following cleanup and redevelopment. Currently, more than 50 percent of the land in Providence is tax exempt. In addition to providing employment opportunities for residents in adjacent

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



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**Date of Announcement:**  
May 2000

**Amount:** \$200,000  
**Greenspace:** \$50,000

**Profile:** The City of Providence will assess the degree of environmental contamination existing at the 280-acre Narragansett Landing target area in order to commence plans for waterfront redevelopment.

#### Contacts:

Department of Planning  
and Development  
Providence, Rhode Island  
(401) 351-4300

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 1  
(617) 918-1424

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflld/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

neighborhoods, the revitalization of this area will supply the tax revenue needed for continued infrastructure, service, and quality of life improvements.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The Pilot will perform environmental site assessments in order to determine if any significant releases have occurred. Where applicable, the Pilot will conduct remediation feasibility studies to plan appropriate future actions. The Pilot will also conduct outreach activities for stakeholders about the brownfields redevelopment process.

The Pilot plans to use its greenspace funding to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments in the Narragansett Landing area. The city is preparing a vision plan and redevelopment plan for the area that include creating an urban forest, public park, and a 2.2-mile riverwalk along the Upper Narragansett Bay.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Activities planned as a part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting Phase II environmental site assessments to evaluate actual subsurface conditions;
- Conducting Phase III environmental site assessments to determine nature and extent of contamination, if necessary;
- Conducting outreach activities to stakeholders about the brownfields redevelopment process through community interviews, multilingual fact sheets, charrettes, and meetings; and
- The Pilot plans to use its greenspace funding to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments in the Narragansett Landing area.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*